

THE
CHARACTER

OF A
Compleat Physician,
Or NATURALIST.



DR. *Haskel* in his *Apology* very aptly calls Anatomy, and the Knowledge of Simples, the two Legs of Physic. And that the Compleat Physician may have both his Legs, I shall follow his footsteps.

Anatomy is of greatest fame and repute, tho not of much real use to the curing Mankind. The use of Simple doth the most part to the only end of this Art, Man's Health, which is the Difference in its Definition. The former respects Contemplation, the latter the Practice; and therefore call'd by us Physic. The former is performed at home in a House, with little expence of time, labor, or pains taking; the latter requires all these in a high measure.

The Compleat Physician (supposing in him University Learning) must begin with Anatomy, the Subject of his Art: He must know all Parts, and their Sub-divisions, whether similar or organical, chiefly the Vessels and all Passages of the Body, the use of Parts, their Situation, Connexion, Figure, Structure, Proportions, Complements, Defects, Communities, Differences, compounding Elements, Faculties, Actions, and Uses, which are performed by Artificial Dissections, Measurements, Ligatures, Injections, and other useful Operations. He is to be well versed also in Comparative Anatomy, in all sorts of Animals whatsoever; By which means he will discover the seat of Diseases,

113
3

and Symptoms, their Causes, and Effects, Sympathies, and Antipathies; which way the matter of Diseases passeth from part to part, and also of all the fluids in our Bodies. 'Tis helpful also very much in the Prognosticks, as well as in the Diagnosticks.

In the Practical it teacheth what Veins or Arteries are fittest to be opened, where Fontanels to be made, where Cupping-glasses, Plasters, Ointments, &c. are to be applied, where and how Incisions to be made.

This part of Nature hath bin very well cultivated by many learned Hands, both abroad and at home, by the Two Glories of our Nation the Immortal *Harvey*, my honoured Friend and Patron, and Dr. *Glisson*, and some others; the now much neglected where it ought to be most cultivated.

One part seems to be wholly neglected (from which the greatest Practical Skill is to be attained) that is by feeding, or suddain killing Animals with Poisons, Volatil, or Lixivial Salts, or with any of the stronger Simples, and after opening them, to find out the effects upon the Blood, and Humours of the Body. Whosoever hath rightly considered and digested the Physical qualities (which is a great defect in Medicine) will attain very clearly the true Nature of things, as applicable to Man's Body, and discover plainly the infinite Errors in Practice, and may demonstrate his Practice by reasoning from Effect to Cause, and from Cause to Effect; and then by comparing one to another, and those to the Tribes hereafter mentioned.

The other Leg of Physick is, The knowledge of Natural things, in the Latitude after expressed.

'Tis not the business of this Paper to set forth the great and large extent of Physic, that is of all Tangible Bodies of the Universe. This hath bin frequently perform'd in many Oration, and Harangues at the College of Physicians, especially in this incomparable Speech of Sir *Thomas Millington*, both for Matter and Language, Anno 1679.

That which is intended in this Paper is, to set out a Compleat Physician, and thereby to guide people in their choice, when they have occasion to use one; wherein men are exceedingly mistaken, to the loss of Health, Life, and Money.

I begin with the Name, which is in our *English* Tongue the most proper of any Language whatsoever. The word Physician, derived from the Greek *physikos*, is plainly and fully rendred by the word

word *Naturalist*, (that is) one well vers'd in the full extent of Nature, and Natural things; hereunto add the due, and skilful preparation and application of them to Mens Bodies, in order to their Health, and prolongation of Life, and you have a comprehensive Definition of a Physician. 'Tis not then a particular Knowledge or Art of one or a few things, but in general of all Bodies, whether Elements, inanimate, or living.

Now this Knowledge implies not only a bare visible skill of their Names, and Parts only; but a strict and serious examination of them by diligent experiments, and tryals of them by all the Senses, by all wayes, and comparisons amongst themselves, to investigate their Natures relating to men principally, and all other uses they may be applyed to. I shall speak briefly to each, and first of Plants.

Vegetables being the largest Genus in Nature, comprehendeth the greatest part by far of *Materia Medica*, or things used for Physic. These are to be known in all their Parts, by Name, as also as digested into Tribes, and Families as they are reasonably well done by both the *Bambins*, and better by Dr. *Morison*, tho not so suitable to the design of teaching others, as 'tis to be wished they had. But of his Work and a better Method, something shall be shewed in due time.

By a right Method may be more than conjectured the properties of Simples by the bare first sight of them, and folly known by the other senses, as every one must confess, who hath seriously reflected on this Matter. Nay, hereby also may well nigh be known (I had almost said) perfectly, what they will afford, what Waters, Chymical Oils, Spirits, Salts, and in what quantity. This, I do not say of all the Tribes, but of most of them in a just Method delivered. But if you apply them to the other Senses, especially taste and smell, and other tryals may be found out their full Nature. But then there is required some exercises of the Senses, and exactness in them, and also the skill of words adapted to each sense. As for Tastes the Vintners have added some, and where defect is, more are to be invented. The want of words applicable to our Senses, is the greatest impediment to the improvement of this most divine and useful Art.

The next thing is, to range into a good Method what Properties are suitable to what Diseases, and what parts in particular, (let the Instance be bitter) as also in what harmful. And by this

way, you may in a few sheets of Paper comprise all Diseases well defined, and their Remedies by Simples (generally the best way of Practice) more fully, more scientifically, and better retained, than in many and huge Volumes of Herbals, Pharmacopœas, and Practical Writers.

This being done, then the Physician is to find out by Tryals, Sympathies, and Antipathies, as to Mixture of them one with another, Preparation of them by Powdering, &c. and by Distillation; whereby may be known, what is fit for Distillation, what for Decoctions. 'Tis a shame to see the Pharmacopœa's stufft with such a multitude of distill'd Water and not one in ten good for any thing, nay offensive both to tast, smell, and stomach. Nay, there are few of the more generous Spirits, but have Ingredients which afford nothing beneficial, but rather prejudicial to those Compound Waters: Whereby the Apothecaries Shops are surcharged to their great trouble, and hurt to the Patient, by such nauseous and offensive Waters, whereof more may be said on occasion, and some may be added, wholly unknown, tho very common, and written of by Authors, and no Vertues annexed to them.

Then let him observe what Seasons (not Astrological Configurations) are best to gather Herbs; for 'tis certain, some Plants shall at some Seasons yield well, at other little, or nothing good.

This Physician also is to have some skill in Chymistry, to detect Cheats, improve Philosophy, and some Medicines which may be useful.

He may attain to the Knowledge of Emperics Medicines, being generally less compounded than in the Shops; and thereby shall find out some useful Medicines by a skilful Analysis of them, but more especially by experimenting them with other Bodies.

He is acquainted with the Philosophical Trades, especially the Refiners and Dyers, for he that is versed in the latter, chiefly of the Silk and Linnen Dyer may without much difficulty discover, the compounds of Medicinal Waters, which hath hitherto puzzled all the World. Add hereto that no Manufacture but affords some light in Physics.

As for Minerals, dissolved in their proper Menstrua, he shall have the most dry and astringent Tact and Nature of Gold.

Gold, the most bitter of Silver, the most nauseous rough and contracting tast of Copper, the sweetish of Lead and Tyn, the rough and astringent of Iron.

As for Animals they mostly serve for food, and yield much volatil Salt, some Water, Spirit, and Lixivial Salt, little differing each from other, all which the Physician ought to know; which and what parts of them are best and useful, and wherein. Two Books I recommend for Birds, Mr. Willoughby Published by the excellent Mr. Ray; The other of Shells, &c. done by Mr. Lyffer of York, both which are Treated in a most singular Method.

And for Insects, *Musset* and *Johnson* are best.

As for Fishes, they are yet very confusedly digested. These with the other Natural things are Methodized in an easie way, and may come abroad.

Earths, Their Natures are easily discovered by the Senses, and ready Experiments, and pretty well known.

Stones many have written of, but their Qualities falsely delivered for gain only, and are not of much use; yet some our Countrey affords, much surpassing Pearl and Coral in destroying Acids, their principal, if not sole use.

This Physician can discern betwixt true and Counterfeit Medicines, what Remedies either Simple, or Compound; as for Strangers brought from foreign Parts, he can discover their Uses and Qualities, and whereof compounded, and perhaps exalt their Vertues by imitating them, and easily find the Cheats in them.

He can give proper Names and Definitions to all Natural things brought to him.

He knows what things are of great Charge, but of little Use, and the various degrees of their Natures. He can invent more grateful, plain, and effectual Medicines than are commonly in use, except to such Persons to whom nothing that is Physic is grateful.

From Ignorance of these things, proceeds (that great Impediment of Improvement in this Art) the Doctrine of Occult Qualities. The unsteadiness of Physicians in their choice of and adhering to good Medicines, (not knowing they are so) for in this sense Hipp. Aphor. 3. 1. *Experientia est Doctrina*, is most true. Hence Receipts get Credit, Medicines

so

So often altered, and new ones gapt after; whereof as yet there is no end.

This Physician rightly considering finds, The Herbs make some Plants as well as the Chymicks, make almost all their Medicines to be Universal, so leading people into many, and sometimes dangerous Errors.

He is able to advise fixing Diet, and Remedies, at all times and places, wheresoever he comes, which cannot be done without the foresaid Knowledge.

But the Reader will ask, whether there be any such Physician in the World, or ever was, or may be. Answer yea, and that 'tis not difficult where a good Method and stubborn Labour go together.

He is furnished with a good Library, of such Authors as Treat on those Arguments. 'Tis a great reproach that some Physicians of great Fame and Practice, gotten by ill and ungenerous wayes, know very little or nothing in any thing abovesaid, and have scarce a Book towards any of those ends, unless of Anatomy.

This Physician doth truly maintain the honour of his Profession, avoids the due reproaches of such as are Subordinate to him, can with sensible Arguments confute the obstreperous falsehoods of the Adversaries of his Faculty, and his own, can judge clearly of the falsehoods and deceits of Physic-mongers.

He takes that way that one of the great Masters of his Art, *Galen* did, spares no Pains, Travail, or Charge to investigate new and better Materials for his Art. *Galen* and many other have Travailed into far Countries to this very purpose.

Lastly, He takes nothing upon trust, but consults his own Senses, and other strict tryals, and becomes a Compleat Naturalist or Physician.

But tho my task here ends, yet his Religion and Morality are to be considered. As for the former he hath wove into his Practice the *Religio Medici* of that famous Person, and Honor too of this Art, Sir *Thomas Brown* of *Normich*, to whom I recommend the Reader.

His Morality is other, grave, continent, pitiful to, and careful of his Patients. Writing his Receipts solely for their good, and not for the gain of others his Subordinates. He is continent wise and prudent, mild and modest, hath veracity and clearness

in all his Sayings. In his Prognosticks exceeds not the boundaries of his Art, and Nature, his proper Sphere; abominates the common way of conforming his Religion to his Interest, and the usual frauds of Astrology and Uromantie.

He is decent in his Habit, courteous in Behaviour, neither morose, nor talkative, able and ready to satisfy any of his Patients in hearing the Sick man's Complaint, and rationally to satisfy him in his Scruples. Determines nothing till he hath a full and clear Idea of the Disease, Symptoms, and their Causes, and not till then; squares his Intentions and Medicaments to each of them.

He smiles at the common Vogue of the World in choosing their Physicians, and envies not those empty ones who gain great Estates and Glory, by outward shews, and by ungentile, and some by fordid and debauched ways. Such as have only a modish Habit, a neat and well-furnished House, a Coach and Horses, a Velvet Coat, a fine Periwig, a curiously-headed Cane, a smooth and starched Behaviour, flattering Language, commending all, enslaving his Judgment to the hearer's Opinion, officious needles, and frequent Visits. He laughs out-right at those who spend their precious time in hearing and hunting after News, and carrying it from House to House, and those who read Lectures on Chairs, Beds, Rooms and Hangings, or on *Don Quixot*. He thinks the usual aucupium of Entertainments; telling of Shews, mispent time, and judgeth not these any part of his Profession. But in all these little Arts, which serve only to gain, he useth commendable Prudence. And at all spare times you shall find him in his Study, where I leave him.

But perhaps the considering, inferring, and knowing Reader doth expect a Character also of those who are call'd Mountebanks, and Empiricks; because contraries illustrate each others. To whom this answer may be given. The first is, He that may be call'd so, without any Action at Law, as being not lawfully permitted to Practice by the Laws of England. But this sense reacheth not the meaning of the word. *Empirie* is a Greek word coming from *empeiria* Experience, and signifies no more than an Experimentor; that is, one that pretends only Experience for his Practice, (which *Hipp. Aph. 1.* calls *Deceitful*) without ability of giving a rational account of the Disease, Cause, Symptoms, and Medicines he prescribes; so that an unlawful Practiser, (if able) may not be call'd
in

in this true and genuine Sense an Empiric; Nor he (though a Licentiate to Practice) be angruly said to be an Empiric, tho in the highest order of Licentiates. I conclude by saying, That he who hath the fewest of the abovesaid requisites of a Compleat Physician, according to the degrees of his recess therefrom, may deserve this ignominious Title.

Mountebanks are properly & only such who upon Stages and in open places proclaim (commonly with the addition of Auric tricks as good as those forementioned, disclaimed by the Compleat Physician, tho done in retail, and in private, and therefore less observed) the great Experience of his most singular Remedies, suitable to all Persons, Ages, and Sexes.

To fill up this empty Page, take a part of an Elegant Fable of Phaedrus, of a Cobler turn'd Physician.

*Non arripit ille Medicum se prudentia
Verum stupore velis factum nobilium.
Rex, advocat, comitum, her, addidit
Quem putavit esse vos dementem.
Qui capite vellemus amantissimum
Qui calceando non commiserat pedes.
Hoc peritum vixit ad illud dementem.
Quorum stulticia quales inpenduntia est.*

But perhaps the considering, interesting, and knowing Reader both expect a Character also of those who are call'd Mountebanks, and Empiricks; because contraries illustrate each others. To whom this answer may be given, That it is not his that may be call'd so, without any Affliction at Law, as being not lawfully permitted to Practice by the Laws of England. But this sense teaches not the meaning of the word, Empiric is a Greek word coming from *Empiricus*; and signifies no more than an Experimentator; that is, one that pretends only Experience for his Practice, (which Empiric, i. e. calls Deserv'd) without ability of giving a rational account of the Disease, Cause, Symptoms, and Medicines he prescribes; so that an unskillful Practiser, (if able) may not be call'd an

London Printed for E. W.